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SPOTLIGHTING FEDERAL GRANTS #3

PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION OF AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

Planned Parenthood Federation of America and its numerous affiliates receive approximately \$70 million per year--over half their total income--from federal and state treasuries. Almost half of this comes from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for family planning activities. President Lyndon B. Johnson first proposed family planning funding "to foster the integrity of the family." Today's programs, regrettably, advance clearly contrary ends. Recent lawsuits indicate the range of Planned Parenthood's increasingly controversial activities:

- o In Salt Lake City, Utah, Planned Parenthood officials allegedly advised a pregnant 16-year old to forge her parents' signatures on consent forms for an abortion.
- o In Ogden, Utah, Planned Parenthood allegedly distributed contraceptive devices to minors without their parents' knowledge, a violation of state law.
- o In Pasadena, California, a Medi-Cal patient developed an infected episiotomy and other complications after Planned Parenthood allegedly denied her a postpartum examination because she refused to enroll in a birth control course.

Do such atrocities, and a myriad of others, fulfill the purpose of the federal grants received by Planned Parenthood? Is the integrity of the family being fostered? These questions deserve answers.

THE RECORD

In "The Perils of Your Family," Rocky Mountain Planned Parenthood (RMPP), which recently spent \$143,750 of HHS money,

apparently believes that it is fostering the integrity of the family by advising the students who read the publication that "Maybe your family really is rotten. Some families are. Having a rotten family is a good way to learn how not to live." It then counsels "Don't tell your parents they don't understand you. They may not, but telling them so is only going to make them mad." Planned Parenthood clinics put this philosophy into practice.

L.J., a pregnant 16-year old, visited the Planned Parenthood Association of Utah (PPAU) clinic in Salt Lake City in August 1981. Although clinic representatives mentioned both abortion and adoption as alternatives to keeping the baby, they allegedly explained in detail only the abortion option. The advisors indicated they would mail consent forms to L.J.'s parents. Then they learned the parents were Mormons. L.J. reports that the representatives stated they would inform her when they sent the forms, and suggested L.J. could evade her parents by tampering with the mail and forging signatures on the forms. L.J. left the clinic and did not return.

In March 1982, E.W. discovered that her 17-year old daughter had obtained at the PPAU clinic in Ogden a prescription for contraceptive devices. The daughter had not been sexually active until a teenage friend directed her to the clinic. E.W. says she is "outraged" that PPAU in effect encouraged her daughter to experiment with sex. When E.W. learned about the incident, she discussed it with her daughter and persuaded her not to engage in premarital sexual activity. But Dolores Gilmore, past president of the Citizens for Youth in Kennewick, Washington, reports that not all families fare the same. Calls to a telephone hotline established by her organization reveal numerous cases of teenagers becoming sexually active only after they gain access to contraceptive devices. Studies by Susan Roylance, president of the United Families of America, show that, as federal spending on family planning increases, so do teenage pregnancy rates; the correlation is a statistically significant .882. Both E.W. and Roylance note that Planned Parenthood profits from sexual promiscuity, since this increases the demand for both contraceptive devices and abortions and provides a convenient argument for increased government support.

Utah law requires parental consent before minors can obtain contraceptive or abortion services paid for by public funds. The L.J. and E.W. cases have prompted the United Families Foundation and several Utah parents to sue for an injunction to bar PPAU from receiving its \$312,040 HHS grant.

The parental consent issue is part of a pattern of activity by federally funded Planned Parenthood groups across the nation which seems to promote anti-parent attitudes among adolescents. Planned Parenthood consistently treats traditional moral values as cultural idiosyncracies and advocates moral relativism on sexual issues. Rocky Mountain Planned Parenthood has been particularly active in this field. In "The Perils of Your Family," it

advises students to show courtesy, but nothing more, to parents. States the publication: "The only thing you owe anyone is courtesy, and you owe everyone that." Another RMPP publication, "The Problem With Your Family," whose distribution reaches as far as Maine, echoes this:

Often, it's better merely to keep quiet about problem areas, particularly if parents are rigid and easily hurt. Constant tearing at a wound doesn't help it heal....If you had been born when your parents were and had been brought up in the same time and the same way, you would probably be much as they are now. They are entitled to be different from you. You are entitled to be different from them. You don't have to agree, and you don't have to turn your home into a battlefield.

Other Planned Parenthood materials, paid for in part by federal tax dollars, aim at adolescents and explicitly advocate moral relativism on such sexual issues as casual relationships, masturbation, homosexuality, and prostitution.

Casual sex: "Sex is too important to glop up with sentiment. If you feel sexy, for heaven's sake, admit it to yourself...and...don't trap yourself into a relationship with more sentimental goo."¹

Masturbation: "Masturbation is a perfectly acceptable, useful, comforting thing to do with sexual feelings.... If your mother is a little uptight, and you're jacking off in the sheets every night, she may get a little upset. You can either wash your own sheets, or be more careful. Use a towel."²

Homosexuality: "If...you are a homosexual...you may need to keep quiet about it until you've gained some financial independence."³

Prostitution: "Decide honestly what you want from your relationships with women. Do you want a convenient warm body? Buy one. That's right. There are women who have freely chosen that business, buy one. Don't ever brag to your friends 'I've never had to pay for it,' when you've lied, threatened, and coerced your way through sex. You've paid for it. You just don't know it."⁴

In addition to fostering anti-parent attitudes, federally funded Planned Parenthood groups consistently have advocated

¹ Rocky Mountain Planned Parenthood, The Perils of Puberty, p. 15.
² Rocky Mountain Planned Parenthood, The Problem With Puberty, p. 17.
³ Ibid., pp. 9-10.
⁴ Rocky Mountain Planned Parenthood, You've Changed the Combination, p. 18.

birthrate reduction. Planned Parenthood's Five Year Plan for 1976-1980 hails recent reductions as an "unprecedented achievement" and a "triumph." Planned Parenthood clinics perform nearly 80,000 abortions per year. Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, which recently received a one-year \$198,239 HHS grant, annually sponsors National Condom Week to coincide with Valentine's Day, recently highlighted by a "Rubber Disco" in a dance hall decorated with a rainbow of multi-colored condoms. To be admitted, participants merely must have a condom. The festivities conclude with a \$35 prize to the winner of a condom-blowing contest.

Pittsburgh Planned Parenthood ridicules childbirth in its brochure, "So you finally had a boy?" Next to a drawing of a couple with their four daughters and newborn son, it states:

The only thing you can be congratulated on is your perseverance. You can't be congratulated on your morality or unselfishness....You can't be congratulated on your fertility. After all, any clam, chicken, or small furry animal can beat you at that.

Planned Parenthood seeks birthrate reduction particularly among the poor and minorities. In fact, Margaret Sanger, the organization's founder, was a eugenicist who favored improving the human race through selective breeding. She stated once that "the most merciful thing that a large family does to one of its infant members is to kill it."

Pasadena Planned Parenthood explicitly advocates birthrate reduction to reduce poverty. In a brochure it states:

Rapidly increasing population...[produces a] growing number of uneducated people who can become neither worthwhile employees nor customers....The solution... is...to decrease sharply the rate at which children are being brought into the world....The majority of women being served by Planned Parenthood are...the poor and the near-poor. Elimination of all unwanted births among this group...would eliminate a major social problem that traps millions in poverty and near-poverty.

Pasadena Planned Parenthood's zeal has triggered two lawsuits against the City of Pasadena. Planned Parenthood contracted with the city to perform postpartum examinations and other medical services for Medi-Cal patients, but allegedly denies them to patients who refuse to enroll in birth control classes and to commit themselves in writing to use the techniques. A patient injured by being barred from the treatment and a group of 26 taxpayers objecting to the discriminatory use of public funds each have sued Pasadena. They seek damages and an injunction against the Planned Parenthood contract.

Angelica Oliva, a Medi-Cal patient who was then 23, sought a postpartum examination in January 1982 but refused on religious grounds to enroll in the Planned Parenthood course. Planned Parenthood allegedly withheld services and Oliva developed various complications, including an infected episiotomy, acute physical discomfort and pain, digestive problems, and emotional distress and depression. Oliva's lawsuit seeks \$750,000 in damages.

Father John Moretta of St. Andrew's Church in Pasadena reports that Oliva's case is far from an isolated incident. At least six other women, primarily Hispanics who oppose birth control on religious grounds, have refused treatment within the last four months. Moretta has received other complaints that the classes themselves are frequently abusive. "Planned Parenthood instructors intimidate the patients," he recalls, "and shout at them not to have children because it is animal-like."

In Martinez v. Pasadena, 26 Pasadena taxpayers object to the use of federal and state funds for these activities. The plaintiffs contend that requiring birth control for Medi-Cal services illegally infringes on religious beliefs and discriminates against the poor and minorities. Moretta expects that political pressures generated by the case will persuade the city to cancel its Planned Parenthood contract.

As the Utah plaintiffs seek to protect parental rights through the courts, the Reagan Administration aims at the same thing through administrative actions. A proposed regulation published in the Federal Register in February 1982 would require Planned Parenthood and other grantees under Title X of the Public Health Service Act to notify parents before providing prescription drugs or devices to unemancipated minors under 18. The regulation would also require grantees to comply with state laws, like the Utah statute, requiring parental notification or consent. Other recent HHS guidelines guarantee that this regulation, if adopted in September as planned, would apply to ongoing grants awarded before its effective date.

The Administration justifies the new measure on the ground that

adolescents...will generally benefit from the exercise of a parent's mature judgment on their behalf on matters that may affect their physical well-being....Parents have a direct and legitimate concern in participating in a decision that may have long-term health consequences for the adolescent.

The United Families Foundation case potentially extends the proposed regulation an additional step. In addition to relying on the Utah statute, the plaintiffs in Salt Lake City have based their suit on the language of Title X, the federal law providing most of the government funds for Planned Parenthood's family planning programs across the nation. Section 1001(a) of that

title provides that "to the extent practical, entities which receive grants...shall encourage family participation in projects assisted under this subsection." An interpretation by the Utah court that this provision requires parental consent could curtail Planned Parenthood's activities even more than the HHS regulation, which would require only notification and deference to state laws. At stake is Planned Parenthood's continued ability to perform abortions for approximately 10,000 minors and to provide contraceptive devices for approximately 150,000 minors each year, in most cases without parental consent.

CONCLUSION

It is all too clear that Planned Parenthood's use of taxpayer money ignores federal guidelines and ridicules the intent of the grants. These funds are to foster integrity of the family--not to advance a private organization's own agenda. It is about time for Congress to ask Planned Parenthood some tough questions before dispersing more funds. It is about time that Planned Parenthood be held accountable for what it has been doing with the nation's money.

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